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The Nightmare



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Chapter 1 by Gabbathehutt

I sat upon my father's stable and looked at my horse. His name was Nightmare. He was the blackest horse in the world. One day an old wizard put a curse on Nightmare and he became the most evil horse I had ever seen. He kicked people and spat on them. One day a witch came and tried to lift the curse but Nightmare kicked her in the head. She gave me her spell book and said, "Percy, use this to save your horse." With that I slowly drifted back to the stable deep in thought.

Chapter 2 by Joakim



That night I dreamt of all the things I could do with a spell book. First I kissed Amanda Sterling who I had a crush on for five years. Then I moved my whole family into a mansion were we had servants. Then...

Chapter 3 by intellikat



...I remembered I was supposed to use this spell to break Nightmare, so I put Amanda Sterling back down on the sofa mid-kiss and began to leaf through the book searching for a chapter on horses.

Chapter 4 by Dana Busby



When I woke up, my dream left me with a clarity that I had never felt before. I wondered if the witch had done some sort of spell on me. If she did, it was a good thing because I knew what to

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knew I wouldn't find a chapter on horses, but I was pretty certain I could find something on curses.

Sure enough, I found a page with "To Lift a Curse" scrawled across the top. According to the spell, I would need a female counterpart to conduct the spell. I would also need a mirror, a cloth bag, and pure salt.

I texted Amanda, "Can you come over? It's important."

Supposedly working together toward a goal and against opposing forces is supposed to pull people together. I hoped this would be true for me and Amanda. There was also the chance she would think I was insane.

I went downstairs to gather the materials. Fortunately, my parents were already at work. I didn't need them around for this. I found a cloth bag in the coat closet, a mirror in a bathroom drawer, and Kosher salt in the spice cupboard. Kosher salt should count as 'pure,' I thought.

My phone buzzed. It was Amanda, "See you in 10. ???"

I smiled in spite of myself. I wanted to play it cool so bad, but I knew it was hopeless. I frickin loved this girl; it was hopeless to try and hide it.

Before I knew it, I heard a knock at the door.

"Hey!" I greeted Amanda as I opened the door.

"Hey yourself," she responded playfully. "So what's so important you needed to see me bright and early?"

"Well, here's the deal. I think my horse Nightmare has a curse on him. I realize that sounds totally bunk, but I am willing to try just about anything to get him back the way he was when I got him. Would you help me try a spell to lift a curse?"

She had a confused look on her face. "I don't know if I believe in that kind of stuff, but I'd be happy to help you out." She said to me kindly. "The world that can happen is so wide open, and I'm here to help you make the most of it."

I have to do?

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I seemed like my friend, but there was something off about me.

"Ok, so we have to break this mirror, put it in a bowl, and then top it off with salt," I said briskly. Amanda nodded as if I had just rattled off a chocolate chip cookie recipe.

I put the mirror in the cloth bag and banged it on the counter a few times. It made satisfying cracking and crunching noises. Then I poured the broken glass into a cereal bowl. Amanda poured salt over the broken pieces of mirror and then looked expectantly at me.

I brought the spell book over. Amanda raised her eyebrows. I felt a little stupid, the spell book may be taking things a little far.

"Ok, so now we have to join hands with the mirror between us and say these words."

"Nightmare," we said together, "be cleansed of your curse. This offering will absorb the negative energy placed upon you by the unknown wizard."

Then we repeated it three times, according to the instructions.

We looked at each other apprehensively. Were we actually attempting to conduct magic in the middle of a Tuesday morning, in my kitchen? This was just too surreal.

Amanda broke the silence, "Should we go take a look at Nightmare?"

Chapter 5 by intellikat



"Um, yeah. Yeah! Totally." I snapped out of my habit of thinking a bit too much and wiped my hands on my shirt. "Oh. You want something to drink? Sorry, I didn't even think to ask."

"Whiskey?"

"What?"

"No, I'm kidding, Cecil. OJ's fine."

I went to the kitchen and pulled out a bottle of OJ. I took a sip and then handed it to her. "Here, this will help." She nodded, and we headed back to the sitting room.

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"Ready to go?"

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She nodded, and we headed back to the sitting room.

When we arrived, I knew something was wrong. Nightmare was nowhere to be seen. I looked in his area, but nothing. The stable door had been locked from the outside. Nothing looked disturbed.

"Geez. He was... he was here before."

"Your parents?"

"No, no. They're out of town for the week. What the heck?"

Suddenly, I began to feel the orange juice in the pit of my stomach. All that acidity. No pulp to slow its transport down. I doubled over and retched all over the stable floor. All over that hay.

"You okay, Cecil? What is it?"

"Sorry, sorry." I waved Amanda off. "I think my stomach is just reacting to the OJ. It was on sale... maybe it was past the 'use by' date." I retched again.

"Cecil, just sit down for a minute. I'm going to go get you a glass of water, okay?"

I nodded, and sat down against the stable door as she ran for the house. It was then that I saw him. Crouched in the back corner of the stable, toying with something that looked like a stick, his feet pointing out from beneath a scruffy robe.

The evil wizard.

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